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ABSTRACT

This study delineates the interaction of language and culture as it relates to foreign language instruction and describes appropriate teaching strategies for the implementation of culture in the foreign language classroom. The study is based on the thesis that language and culture are not separable; the teaching of culture is properly a part of foreign language instruction. Relevant professional literature was reviewed in preparation of the study in order to (1) ascertain developments in the field, (2) select examples of esthetic value from the target cultures, and (3) examine techniques for optimum instructional purposes. The modes described in the study are both examples from the literature reviewed and innovations of the writer. Chapter 1 introduces the study; Chapter 2 gives the historical background of foreign language teaching in the United States; Chapter 3 discusses the recent developments in viewing language; Chapter 4 explains the reasons why culture should be a part of foreign language instruction; Chapter 5 describes a variety of teaching techniques for use in the foreign language classroom and suggests appropriate cultural resource materials; and Chapter 6 concludes the study and makes recommendations concerning the professional background of foreign language teachers. A selected bibliography is appended. (Author/NCR)

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# MODES OF TEACHING CULTURE IN THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASS

by

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A RESEARCH PROJECT

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# CHAPTER I

# INTRODUCTION

## Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to: (1) delineate the interaction of language and culture as it relates to foreign language instruction and (2) describe appropriate teaching strategies for the implementation of culture in the foreign language classroom. The study is based upon the thesis that language and culture are not separable; that the teaching of culture is properly a part of foreign language instruction.

## Scope of the Study

Relevant professional literature was reviewed in preparation of the study and in order to: (1) ascertain developments in the field, (2) select examples of esthetic value from the target cultures, and (3) examine techniques for optimum instructional purposes.

The modes described in the study are both examples from the literature reviewed and innovations of the writer.

## Limitation of the Study

The study is not intended to produce a specialist in teaching culture. Rather its aim is to direct modern

foreign language teaching towards the inclusion of culture. The list of teaching techniques discussed is not intended to be exhaustive, but exemplary.

## Definition of Terms

The following terms may be subject to different interpretations. They are used in the study as defined:

Culture refers to "patterns for living", the definition given by Nelson Brooks for culture$_4$.

Mode is used to mean "possible manner".

## Organization of the Study

The following plan of organization is used for the study:

Chapter I introduces the study.

Chapter II gives the historical background of foreign language teaching in the United States as was deemed appropriate for the study.

Chapter III discusses the recent developments in viewing language, as well as the subtle interactions of language, thought, and culture.

Chapter IV explains the reasons why culture should be a part of foreign language instruction and also advocates its early introduction.

Chapter V describes a variety of teaching techniques for use in the foreign language classroom and suggests ap-

propriate cultural resource materials.

Chapter VI concludes the study and makes recommendations as to the professional background of foreign language teachers. It also lists several suggestions for staying in touch with current developments in the target country.

# CHAPTER II

## BACKGROUND

> Query: Is it possible, in a single language, which structurally and spiritually carries the whole metaphysical content of its own Culture, to capture transmissible ideas of the truths of other-tongued men?
>
> --Oswald Spengler

In the early years of the history of language study in the United States, opposition to modern foreign languages was strong. It came from the ranks of the profession of classical languages. "English and other living languages were considered too easy and too utilitarian to serve the high purpose of developing the intellectual faculties."[1]

Thomas Jefferson's view was unique for his times and well in advance of his contemporaries. In founding the University of Virginia, he placed the study of modern foreign languages on the same level as the study of Hebrew, Greek, and Latin.[2] His view was based on the belief that educated men of the world should be able to communicate with one another and that the exchange of ideas with other peoples of the world would be for the benefit of mankind. But Jefferson's modern outlook was rejected by most of his contemporaries.

Though the opposition to the study of modern foreign languages remained strong in the years to come, they eventually became accepted. German, French, and English found a place in the secondary and college curriculum. The strength of the new outlook is reflected in the founding of the Modern Language Association (1883), which organization has thrived up to the present.

Tradition, however, was behind the classics. Thus, in order to gain "academic" acceptance, the profession of modern foreign languages felt compelled to adopt the methods and objectives of the more highly respected classical languages. As a result, grammatical structure and the translation of literary masterpieces were stressed in the teaching of modern foreign languages, an attitude which has not completely vanished from the scene of language instruction even today. The first expansion in language teaching, then, came by way of a union in methodology between the classical and the modern humanists.[3]

After the turn of the century, as the high schools accepted more and more of the total population of school-age children, the character and purpose of education began to change, and enrollments in the classical languages began to decline. The number of students enrolling in modern foreign language courses rose, however, along with the rising school population. French and German became firmly

established in the curriculum, German being by far the most popular language. Spanish did not appear on the scene until shortly before World War I.[4]

The effects of World War I were devastating upon the study of foreign languages. Naturally, enrollments in German suffered most and declined to the point of almost non-existence, but French and Latin toppled down along with German. The prevailing attitude was to be "one hundred percent American". Everything foreign was viewed with dislike and distrust.

The climate for foreign language study remained hostile for the years to come. "Among the reasons often cited are anti-intellectualism in American society, utilitarianism in education, isolationism in politics, and the immigrant's tendency to reject the culture of the 'old country'."[5] Whatever the reasons, a steady decline in foreign language enrollments was the fact and continued to be the fact until after World War II.

It took a great deal of effort and energy to reverse the downward trend in foreign language study. The leadership of William Riley Parker and other prominent educators eventually initiated a movement which was to revitalize the foreign language field. Parker's book, The National Interest and Foreign Languages, first published in 1954, was one of the most influential works in the history of foreign

language teaching. It expressed the view that the availability of Americans who could use a foreign language in their relationships with the peoples of other countries was a matter of "national interest".

Then, in 1957, the Russians launched Sputnik into orbit. It startled the world. The technical prowess of the Russians was a shock to the American public, and "prompted a doubtful attitude toward the qualities of the American educational system".[6] Leaders in education demanded that a greater emphasis be placed on the academic aspects of the curriculum. Official support was quick in arriving. The National Defense Education Act of 1958 recognized the sciences and foreign languages as being critical to the nation's security and provided the necessary funds in their support.

In recent years our commitments abroad and the interdependency among the peoples of the world have created an atmosphere in which international understanding and cooperation is of utmost importance. American education has focussed its attention on the study of other peoples and cultures in order to learn more about them and their values, and to promote international knowledge and world understanding. This new emphasis has widened the study of modern foreign languages to include culture.[7]

## CHAPTER III

## WIDENED SCOPE OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING

### Emerging Trends

The more recent development of foreign language teaching has been closely connected with an ever widening interpretation of the term "language" itself. In the past, humanists have concentrated on the written manifestation of language. They viewed language as an intellectual discipline for a small and gifted minority and restricted its scope mainly to reading and interpreting literature and writing grammatical exercises. Literary masterpieces were studied for an appreciation of the beauty of language and the genius of its author. Yet the foreign language was hardly spoken. This viewpoint of language as an intellectual discipline was even expressed by the founders of our Modern Language Association (1883).[8]

With the advent of the audio-lingual method, however, the definition of language was expanded to include the spoken word. Oral language, such as the simple dialogues of every-day conversation, now received the major emphasis in the classroom. The spoken word, it was felt, should replace the literary style, and pattern practice was favored over grammatical explanation.

The roots of the audio-lingual method are to be found among those doing work in structural linguistics. The dominant influence here came from Leonard Bloomfield who felt that the command of a language was not a matter of grammatical knowledge, for native speakers are quite unable to describe their own language. According to Bloomfield, "the command of a language is a matter of practice."[9]

More recently, as the findings of cultural anthropologists gained widespread acceptance, another element was added to language: Language became redefined as an integral part of the culture with which it is connected. Cultural anthropologists viewed language as a phenomenon structured and motivated by its culture. They even suggested that the foreign culture should be introduced to the students before they begin the study of the foreign language.[10]

How did these results affect the language teaching profession? It simply meant that each reinterpretation of language made a new demand on the foreign language teacher: The audio-lingual method added competence in speaking; the cultural revolution required that the teacher become knowledgeable in the target culture as well. It thus follows that for today's teacher, competence in a foreign language involves more than a mere mastery of that

language. It also includes an understanding of the values and traditions of the people who speak that language. In line with these new directions, the Modern Language Association, in a report of its Interdisciplinary Seminar in Language and Culture, expressed the viewpoint that one of the fundamental aims of foreign language instruction is the transmission of cultural insights.[11]

## Definition of Culture

The term "culture" has two principal meanings: It can be understood as the achievements of high civilization--such as art, music, literature, philosophy--usually referred to as culture with a capital "C". It may also be used in an anthropological sense, meaning the behavioral patterns or life styles of a people, usually referred to as culture with a small "c". Culture with a capital "C" has much to do with the past; culture with a small "c" tends to focus on contemporary life.[12]

According to Ruth Cornfield, the culture of a people is the total way of life shared by everyone in the same speech community. It determines the individual's behavior and language. It consists of a person's action, reactions, gestures, manners of greeting; it influences what a man eats and how he lives; it shapes his attitudes and beliefs; and it sets a limit as to what a man can properly do or say.[13]

There can be no doubt that throughout a person's life the power of the accepted cultural norm exerts a tremendous influence.

Nelson Brooks, in his article "Teaching Culture in the Foreign Language Classroom" separates five different meanings for the term "culture" as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| $culture_1$ | biological growth |
| $culture_2$ | personal refinement |
| $culture_3$ | literature and the fine arts |
| $culture_4$ | patterns for living |
| $culture_5$ | the sum total of a way of life |

He recommends that $culture_4$ should receive the major emphasis in the classroom. He defines it as follows:

> $Culture_4$ refers to the individual's role in the unending kaleidoscope of life situations of every kind and the rules and models for attitude and conduct in them. By reference to these models, every human being, from infancy onward, justifies the world to himself as best he can, associates with those around him, and relates to the social order to which he is attached.[14]

The individual's adjustment to socially acceptable behavior is learned quite early in life, just as language with all its complexities is learned quite early in life. It thus follows that the behavioral patterns of a people, or culture with a little "c", if you wish, should be taught from the very beginning of language instruction. Unfortunately,

it is also the least well understood. Nelson Brooks affirms this when he comments: "It is culture$_4$ that is the least well understood, yet the most important in the early phases of language instruction."[15]

Long ago John Dewey recognized the cultural nature of language. In his famous essay, "My Pedagogic Creed" (1897), he observed that language is almost always treated in the books of pedagogy as an expression of thought. Yet it is fundamentally and primarily a "social instrument". If language is primarily a social instrument, how then can it be divorced from the society that uses it![16]

## Role of Language in Thought

Though languages differ widely from one another in sound, vocabulary, and grammar, all of them are adequate systems of communication within the societies where they function. Each system reflects the Weltanschauung of the society it represents, and in that way shapes the impressions a speaker has of all things he meets. Yet the speaker of any language is seldom aware that when he expresses what to him seems universal truth, he may simply be following the thought forms of his language. His language inevitably limits and colors his meaning, binding him even when he thinks himself most free. His language suggests to him his own special world of social reality, not necessarily

shared by the speakers of other languages.

The idea that language controls our thoughts, in fact, that we are very much at the mercy of the particular language we speak, has first been advanced through the writings of Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf. In 1929 Edward Sapir wrote as follows:

> Language is a guide to "social reality". Though language is not ordinarily thought of as of essential interest to the students of social science, it powerfully conditions all our thinking about social problems and processes. Human beings do not live in the objective world alone, nor alone in the world of social activity as ordinarily understood, but are very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression for their society. It is quite an illusion to imagine that one adjusts to reality essentially without the use of language and that language is merely an incidental means of solving specific problems of communication or reflection. The fact of the matter is that the "real world" is to a large extent unconsciously built up on the language habits of the group. No two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality.[17]

Thus language is explained here as having a profound influence on our thinking. Benjamin Lee Whorf develops the same idea when he comments that:

> . . . the linguistic system (in other words, the grammar) of each language is not merely a reproducing instrument for voicing ideas, but rather is itself the shaper of ideas, the program and guide for the individual's mental activity, for his analysis of impression, for his synthesis of his mental stock in trade.[18]

It is evident from these statements that language plays a large and significant role in shaping our thoughts. Far from being a mere system of communication, it is itself a channel which forms our perceptions.

Salvador de Madariaga in his work, Ingleses, franceses, españoles, makes many interesting observations about the different ways of interpreting life as represented by the English, French, and Spanish languages. As an added feature, he also discusses the German and Italian languages. He leaves no doubt that each of these languages represents a completely different way of thinking.

A striking example how languages determine man's thoughts may be found by comparing English with the language of the Hopi Indians of the southwestern United States. For instance, in English we say "John is dying", just as we say "John is walking", or "John is swimming". We speak of death as though it were an act performed. The Hopi language by contrast expresses this thought as "Dying is taking place in John". Hopi expresses much more accurately the fact that John is really not doing anything, whereas English by the very nature of its grammar is forced to represent dying as an action, even though John is passively, and most likely unwillingly, in the process of dying.[19]

Differences in concept may also be noted by comparing

the English word "ride" with its German and Spanish counterparts. Where an English speaker says "ride", a German uses "reiten" for riding on a horse, but "fahren" for riding in a bus. A Spaniard will make the same distinctions and will use the words "montar" and "viajar", respectively. On the surface the English word apparently matches its foreign counterparts, as it may stand for the same referent. Yet a closer examination reveals that its semantic range is considerably larger, for each of the foreign words covers only a part of the common territory.[20]

Differences in concept are also reflected in the Greek and Latin terms for moon. The Greek word "men" (the measuring one) indicates the function of the moon as a measure of time, while the Latin term "luna" (the shining one) refers to the moon as a source of light.[21]

The relation of language to thinking thus seems to indicate that there is a good deal of truth in the old "liberal" purpose of studying a foreign language in order to "broaden one's mind". It cannot be denied, that the possibilities of broadening one's thinking are indeed increased. The monolingual on the other hand, remains forever unaware of his "mental entrapment". In the words of Frank Grittner:

> Just as a deep-sea creature would be unaware of the nature of water because he has never

> experienced non-water, a monolingual American is unaware of the nature of English because he has had no significant contact with non-English. His ethnocentric mind set traps him into believing that English is the only reasonable way to express reality.[22]

## Role of Language in Culture

Our language is an expression of our culture, shaped by the way we are brought up; and on the other hand, the way we are brought up is shaped by our language. Our language is social in origin and in application: Each individual must learn it anew as part of his upbringing within the society to which he belongs. As we learn our language, we also learn the customs and attitudes of our society, for language reflects these values.

The Chinese way of life, for example, requires an elaborate vocabulary for the many different forms of greetings used. But other languages are far more complicated in this respect: The Nootka Indians of Vancouver Island not only indicate by the choice of words the sex of the person speaking and the sex of the person spoken to, and the social status of the speaker, but in addition thereto, have a specific way of addressing a man who is left-handed, and a specific way of addressing a man who has been circumcised.[23]

Koasati is a Muskogean language still spoken in

southwestern Louisiana. One of the most interesting features of this language is the fact that it employs two types of speech with different grammatical forms occurring in each, one type to be used by women, the other by men. The attitude of the Indians towards the two kinds of speech is noteworthy. They are convinced that the women's speech sounds prettier.[24]

The Eskimos, in their language have no word for coconut, and the Bushmen of the Kalahari Desert have no word for snow. But the Eskimos have many words for snow, describing its precise condition, for that knowledge is vital to their culture. Eskimo life depends on that knowledge. Here are a few examples: "aput" means snow on the ground; "qana" is falling snow; "piqsirpoq" is drifting snow; and "quimuqsuq" is a snowdrift.[25]

Different cultures have their own unique way of classifying colors. For instance, Bassa, a language which is spoken in Liberia, and Shona, a language spoken in Rhodesia, group colors into categories which are quite different from English. While English divides the color spectrum into six colors, Bassa identifies only two colors. Purple, blue, and green are lumped together in Bassa as one color, named "hui"; yellow, orange, and red comprise the other color, named "ziza". Shona divides the color spectrum into three

colors, called "cipswuka", "citema", and "cicena".[26]

Cultural change is also reflected in language. English is full of relics of vocabulary that remind us of the different life-styles of by-gone times. For instance, medieval Englishmen lived very much by hunting and thus had special words for groups of animals, such as a herd of cattle, a flock of sheep, a pride of lions, a skulk of foxes, or a gaggle of geese.[27]

Even in the way a mother talks to her misbehaving child, may we detect how language reflects the customs and attitudes of society: "John, be good!" It seems that the English-speaking world regards a child that misbehaves as bad, or naughty. In France, things are different: "Jean, sois sage!" "John, be wise!" The French child that misbehaves is not considered bad, but unwise, or foolish. In Germany again another view is taken: "Hans, sei artig!" "John, be in line!" The misbehaving German child is neither bad, nor unwise; it is simply nonconforming, out of step, out of line. The latter idea is also expressed by the Hopi Indians of the southwestern United States, but in a much gentler spirit. The Hopi mother will say to her child: "No, no, no, that is not the Hopi way!" Hopi is the right way to do things. It is the way one is expected to behave as an accepted member

of the tribe. The Hopi child that misbehaves is not considered bad, nor unwise, nor out of line. It is simply not on the Hopi way.[28]

Indeed, "Language is the most typical, the most representative, and the most central element in any culture. Language and culture are not separable."[29] The infinite varieties of languages and cultures are produced out of human experiences. When we share another language and culture, we also share a human experience, different in some degree to what is possible in our own. These differences give us an opportunity for perspective, teaching us tolerance of the ways of others, and respect for the treasures that are our own.

# CHAPTER IV

## REASONS FOR TEACHING CULTURE

### Full Communication

If we teach a foreign language without introducing at the same time the culture in which that language operates, we are merely conveying words to which the student attaches the wrong meaning, for unless he understands the underlying cultural image of the word, he will attach his own native image to the foreign word. The following examples will shed some light on this fact.

One of the oldest words in the Germanic language family is the word "corn". This particular word let its meaning meander as it came down through the centuries. Semantically "corn" has become specialized to mean "wheat" to the British, "oats" to the Scots, and "maize" to the Americans. Not knowing this fact, the British Government during World War II once bought "corn" from the United States for a European famine relief. But corn (maize) is not eaten in Europe. It is fed to the cattle only. As might be expected, this little bit of linguistic and cultural ignorance cost a few million dollars to repair.[30]

The word "school" as used in a German setting envelops

important cultural differences which are not readily apparent to the American student. Both the schools and the universities in Germany have at present a much more restricted function than those in the United States. They are concerned with the formal subjects of education, leaving to the family the responsibility for the child's social development. There are practically no social activities connected with school. Homemaking is not part of the curriculum. Lunchrooms likewise do not exist, and the school day is short. The tradition of separate schools based on the academic ability of the student is still very strong. The common school for everybody is attended only during the first four years of a child's education. The comprehensive American high school with its extra-curricular activities and its interscholastic athletic programs, so important in American life, is virtually unknown in Germany.

The proper use of the words of a foreign language is an art in itself. It cannot be mastered correctly without at the same time understanding the cultural connotations which underlie each word. The Italian proverb, "traduttore--traditore", (A translator is a traitor), so aptly describes the linguistic misunderstanding which arises from language knowledge without cultural knowledge. Here are a few examples:

The English word "engineer" corresponds to the Italian "ingegnere" if one refers to a "civil engineer", but it is "macchinista" if one refers to an engineer on a train. The word "fire" is "fuoco" if one implies fire in an absolute sense, but it is "incendio" if someone's house is burning down. The French use "serviette" to mean "towel", "napkin", and "briefcase". The Spanish word "esperar" is used to mean both "to hope" and "to wait". The word "lust" is "Lust" in German, but with the harmless meaning of "pleasure".[31]

The enormous danger of failing to communicate in the modern world is manifest in the tragic error made by a Japanese translator. There is evidence that the atomic bomb might never have been dropped on Hiroshima if the translator had been able to grasp the correct meaning of the word "mokusatsu", which was used by the Japanese Government in its reply to the Potsdam surrender ultimatum. This word was translated as "ignore", rather than correctly as "withholding comment pending decision". Therefore, believing the Japanese had rejected the ultimatum, the Allies went ahead with the nuclear bombardment.[32]

The problem of failing to communicate in the modern world may also be seen in the following amusing examples: The word "merci" means "thank you" in French, but "freight"

in Italian. A French businessman visiting Italy for the first time, once remarked to his friend that, in his opinion, the Italians are an extremely polite people, for they had big signs saying "thank you" on all their freight trains.[33]

The Italian word "sale" looks like the English word "sale", but it means "salt". An Italian traveling in the United States wondered why so much salt was advertised everywhere, especially in stores where one would not expect to buy it.[34]

An American tourist exploring some of the picturesque villages of southern Mexico found himself in an embarrassing situation when he ordered a simple "hot dog" for his noon meal, because in Spanish "un perro caliente" is a "dog in heat".

It thus becomes clear that foreign language instruction must not be separated from the teaching of cultural insights, so that the student will be able to communicate in the 'fullest sense of the word". Full communication from one world to another, from one cultural world to another, must not be underestimated in an age which has conquered distances through modern means of transportation and which has attempted to make all peoples of the earth potential next-door neighbors.

## Reduction of Culture-Bound Attitudes

Every culture imprints a value system on its members. All cultural behavior is learned behavior. It is taught by the old to the young. The foreign language student must learn that the people of other cultures react to the realities of life in many different ways. "The American way is not the only way, nor is it the best way. It is simply the way that works best for Americans. Other ways work best for other peoples."[35]

Most of our students live in a monolingual and monocultural environment. Thus it is inevitable that they become "culture-bound". A report of the MLA Interdisciplinary Seminar in Language and Culture defines the culture-bound person as follows: "A person whose entire view of the world is determined by the value-perspectives he has gained through a single cultural environment--who thus cannot understand or accept the point of view of another individual whose values have been determined by a different culture--such a person may be considered culture-bound in his attitudes."[36] The MLA report recommended that the reduction of the culture-bound attitude should be an important goal of education as a whole.

Culture-bound individuals are inclined to make premature and inappropriate value judgments. They are brought

up in the belief that their cultural patterns are right and proper, while the practices and beliefs of others are correct only to the degree that they reflect the beliefs of one's own group. Many of our students react with bewilderment, intolerance, or even hostility towards another set of values. Others experience a "culture shock" when they first encounter a different model of behavior whose significance they do not understand. It may cause them to consider the foreign peoples whose language they are trying to learn as very peculiar, if not ill-mannered. The following examples will illustrate this point:

Latin Americans cannot carry on a conversation comfortably unless they are very close to the conversational partner. North Americans on the other hand, find this closeness offensive. They "are decidedly uncomfortable when someone intrudes into their personal space bubble."[37] Thus their reaction is to back away. This in turn causes Latin Americans to judge North Americans as cold and unfriendly. The custom of personal closeness during a conversation holds true for the Spanish-speaking world as a whole.

Americans avoid touching strangers, because body contact has sex connotations in their culture. Members of other cultures, however, find it necessary to touch the

conversational partner on the arm, on the elbow, or to pat him on the shoulder in order to maintain good rapport. Spanish speakers even give slaps of affection into the stomach. This seemingly unusual cultural phenomenon is frequently attested to in Spanish literature. The following is an example from Oficio de muchachos: "Rio e hizo como que me tiraba un puñetazo al estómago. Vuelve pronto. Te esperaremos."[38] (He laughed and acted as if he were giving me a slap in the stomach. Come back soon. We shall expect you.)

In Italy signs of affection are not restricted to among relatives alone. Men are not inhibited from embracing and kissing each other, and it is not uncommon to see them walking down the street arm in arm. Teenage girls often stroll along the street holding hands with each other. Both are examples of perfectly acceptable street behavior that might very well cause annoyance here.

To the uninformed, gestures can be extremely confusing. For instance, whistling in a public theater indicates approval in the United States, while in Spain the same action stands for disapproval. If an American holds his hand with the palm towards his face and moves his fingers, he means to signal "Come here!" In Italy this same gesture means "Good-bye".

That our gestures are tied to the particular language we speak, was proven by Ray L. Birdwhistell, one of the pioneers in body-motion research, who also coined the term "kinesics" to describe this field. Birdwhistell filmed numerous conversations of Fiorello La Guardia, former mayor of New York, who happened to be trilingual. As he later on studied the films he had made, but with the sound turned off, he came to the conclusion that anyone who was familiar with the three cultures involved, could immediately detect whether La Guardia was speaking, English, Italian, or Yiddish.[39]

From the foregoing examples it becomes clear that a knowledge of the codes of behavior of a foreign people is important if students are to understand why people from another society act differently. Furthermore, by analyzing basic differences between cultures, students will soon learn a great deal about their own culture, and they will become conscious of certain cultural attitudes of their own they had never questioned before. In the process, it is hoped, they will be able to accept another culture on its own terms, for what it means to the members of that culture. Comprehending and accepting the other culture must underlie all efforts towards effective communication.

## Stimulation of Interest

Introducing cultural factors in the foreign language class, is, by the way, an activity that stimulates much interest in language study, besides being a welcome change from oral drills or grammar exercises. Most students are curious to know more about the foreign peoples and their way of life, and they will find the discussions about culture an exciting experience. Cultural materials provide many topics of personal interest to a student, thereby increasing his motivation. This is important, for without interest and without motivation no learning takes place. Besides, the inclusion of culture in the foreign language classroom could well provide an important bridge for the language student in his search for relevancy.

## Necessity of Early Introduction

Recent social-psychological investigations recommend that cultural instruction be started early in a student's life, that is not later than the age of ten. For it is at this age that the foreign people are most likely to appear "different but interesting", while older age groups will judge them as "different and bad".[40]

A strong point for an early introduction of culture is also made by Frederick L. Jenks in his book, Planning to Teach Culture. He states that cultural learning is

based upon human growth and development. For instance, by age twelve the end of maturational childhood sets in. The child now becomes an individual who thinks beyond the present time. Ideals are formed at all levels: physical, mental, social, and spiritual. Moral values are acquired. Cultural learning now becomes more pronounced, and most of it will probably be complete by age nineteen. It is during this period that the life styles of one's own group become firmly established in the young adult. He becomes set in his cultural behavior, making it almost impossible for him to accept a foreign people's way of life. Therefore, it is of such great importance that a foreign culture be introduced early in a student's life, that is before prejudices begin to develop.

In the foreign language classroom, culture should definitely be included from the beginning of language instruction, even though this must be done in English. Due to the high attrition rate at the end of the second year of high school language study, one simply cannot afford to wait until the student is able to study the foreign culture in the target language. Culture should be taught when we have students to teach! Nelson Brooks supports this view when he comments: "Because of the large decrease in population in language classes with each succeeding year of

advancement, the concept of culture can be communicated to only a relatively small number of students, unless this is done in the earliest phases of their instruction."[41]

Ruth Cornfield also advocates that culture should be taught right away. She comments as follows: "Acquainting the student with the culture of foreign people is an enormous, unending task which should be done slowly and unceasingly. It should begin on the very first day of the study of the foreign language and continue every day thereafter as long as the student is in contact with the language."[42]

It must be realized that learning to communicate fully in a foreign language is a double task: Speaking the target language alone is not sufficient; it implies understanding and accepting the value of the target culture as well. In the process it often becomes necessary to shed one's own fixed values and attitudes, a painful undertaking. Therefore, cultural learning should be started early in a student's life, that is before the culture-bound attitude begins to develop.

# CHAPTER V

## MODES OF TEACHING CULTURE

### Basic Goals

A good basic tool for cultural planning is Howard Lee Nostrand's 'Emergent Model' of a Sociocultural System which he developed in 1967. Nostrand's model has four main divisions, entitled the culture, the society, the individual, the ecology. It ranks as one of the primary cultural outlines in the teaching field. It can be used as a guide for the organization of resource materials and in the study of specific cultural groups.

Cultural instruction should be purposeful. There should be a good reason for each and every cultural activity in the classroom. Ned Seelye suggests seven cultural goals as a basic frame for cultural instruction in the foreign language classroom. They are as follows:

1. THE SENSE, OR FUNCTIONALITY, OF CULTURALLY CONDITIONED BEHAVIOR: The student should demonstrate an understanding that people act the way they do because they are using options the society allows for satisfying basic physical and psychological needs.

2. INTERACTION OF LANGUAGE AND SOCIAL VARIABLES: The student should demonstrate an understanding that such social variables as age, sex, social class, and place of residence affect the way people speak and behave.

3. CONVENTIONAL BEHAVIOR IN COMMON SITUATIONS: The student should indicate an ability to demonstrate how people conventionally act in the most common mundane and crisis situations in the target culture.

4. CULTURAL CONNOTATIONS OF WORDS AND PHRASES: The student should indicate an awareness that culturally conditioned images are associated with even the most common target words and phrases.

5. EVALUATING STATEMENT ABOUT A SOCIETY: The student should demonstrate the ability to evaluate the relative strength of a generality concerning the target culture in terms of the amount of evidence substantiating the statement.

6. RESEARCHING ANOTHER CULTURE: The student should show that he has developed the skills needed to locate and organize information about the target culture from the library, the mass media, people, and personal observations.

7. ATTITUDES TOWARD OTHER CULTURES: The student should demonstrate intellectual curiosity about the target culture and empathy toward its people.[43]

To introduce culture in the foreign language classroom, short presentations on a topic of interest should be scheduled at regular intervals. Whenever possible, these presentations should include appropriate pictures or slides from the target culture. All cultural topics should be relevant to the needs and interests of the students.

## Influences of Foreign Cultures

The influences of foreign cultures touch our lives in many ways. At the present time, we import a large number of goods from all parts of the world. Our movie houses show foreign films, our museums display works by foreign artists, our orchestras play music by foreign composers. The signs of foreign culture surround us everywhere.

A good way to begin a series of cultural presentations in the classroom is to let the students become aware of the influences foreign cultures have had on American life and that such influences exist all around them. We might ask the following questions: "Do you know that you already speak some foreign languages when you speak English?" "Can you think of some examples?"

| German | French | Spanish |
|---|---|---|
| Gesundheit! | garage | poncho |
| Volkswagen | boutique | siesta |
| dachshund | bureau | fiesta |
| kindergarten | avalanche | adobe |
| verboten | crochet | patio |
| dummkopf | croquet | rodeo |
| hinterland | ballet | bonanza |

Some of the foods we eat are another example of the impact of foreign cultures. The following all have become accepted American foods:

| German | French | Spanish |
|---|---|---|
| frankfurter | omelette | frijoles |
| wiener | souffle | taco |
| pumpernickel | eclair | tamale |
| sauerkraut | fondue | chile |
| wienerschnitzel | casserole | fritos 44 |

## Comparison with Native Culture

At the heart of all human knowledge lies the ability to identify things which are the same and things which are different. If in the native culture a certain form of behavior has a different function in the foreign culture, misunderstanding is almost certain to arise. Therefore, a teacher may wish to introduce cultural differences by comparing them with the native culture. By using the native culture as a frame of reference, different cultural patterns may easily be explained. The following example will illustrate this technique:

> Situation: A soccer match is in progress in Spain. There is a moment of fast action in front of one of the goals. Most of the spectators stand up and whistle loudly. They are displaying:
>
> (1) enthusiastic approval
> (2) great displeasure

An American not familiar with the Spanish cultural pattern, would probably choose (1) "enthusiastic approval", since in the United States the same behavior stands for approval. The correct answer, however, is (2) "great displeasure".

The following are additional examples of cultural comparisons. The Church in Germany, for instance, is supported by a tax. The amount of tax is determined by law, collected by the State, and then distributed to the various churches. In the United States, on the other hand, the Constitution stipulates a separation of Church and State. Churches are therefore supported by private contributions.[45]

German movie houses charge according to the location of the seat desired. Thus the least expensive seats are closest to the screen, while the preferred and most expensive seats are located towards the back. In the United States all seats in a movie house cost the same, regardless of location.[46]

A Frenchman enjoys looking at attractive young women passing by, and he does so quite openly. In the United States, however, young men are much less obvious in their girl watching.[47]

The Spaniard loves the art of conversation, and one invariably finds him in small groups in one of the many sidewalk cafes where he spends hours over a cup of coffee talking to his friends. In the United States sidewalk cafes are not customary.

In Latin America wooden houses on one hand and brick

or concrete houses on the other represent social distinctions. Wooden houses tend to be the shacks that belong to low-income groups. In the United States, however, wooden frame houses can be as luxurious and expensive as any other.

In Latin America, because of the enormous difficulties of transportation and communication caused by geographic factors, large Indian populations still live in small tribal villages, isolated from the rest of the world. They do not speak Spanish. In the United States such isolation is no longer possible because of intensive networks of transportation and communication.

## Culture Assimilator

An excellent technique for teaching cross-cultural understanding is the culture assimilator. The technique was first developed by social psychologists in order to facilitate adjustment to a foreign culture, which sometimes becomes necessary. According to Ned Seelye, the method of the culture assimilator has three advantages over the older method of presenting information in books: "Assimilators are more fun to read; they actively involve the student with a cross-cultural problem; and they have been shown to be more effective in controlled experiments."[48]

A culture assimilator is a short description of an

incident of cross-cultural interaction between an American and a foreigner which the American is most likely to misunderstand. Following the description are four different explanations of the incident from which the student should try to select the correct one. If the student makes the wrong choice, then he is asked to look up additional explanations which prepare him for another choice. A culture assimilator involves the student in silent reading. Basically a self-learning technique, it may be assigned as homework. The following is an example of a culture assimilator:

> As a young American tourist in Tours, France, you have been invited to dinner at the home of a French business associate of your father. You know that under such circumstances, it is considered polite to bring a bouquet of flowers to the hostess. Accordingly you arrive with a handsome bouquet of white chrysanthemums. As your hostess greets you, you offer the bouquet to her. You notice a look of surprise and distaste cross her countenance before she masters herself and accepts your offering graciously.
>
> All evening you are haunted by the feeling that you have done something wrong. You would like to apologize--but you are at a loss to know what for.
>
> <u>What could explain your hostess' reaction?</u>
>
> A. A bouquet of chrysanthemums is considered an apology for a serious blunder in French culture.
>
> B. A bouquet of chrysanthemums is considered a proposal of marriage in French culture.
>
> C. Chrysanthemums are considered the flower of death in French culture.
>
> D. The hostess was allergic to chrysanthemums.

You chose A. Although this symbolic use of flowers would be valid in some cultures, the French do not consider the chrysanthemum as a flower of apology.

You chose B. This would seem to be a logical possibility, but in French culture the symbolism of the chrysanthemum is allied to an aspect of life other than romance. The French consider the rose the flower of love.

You chose C. Your choice is the correct one. The chrysanthemum is considered "la fleur de mort" because it is traditionally used in conjunction with funerals and interrments in France.

You chose D. To the allergy-conscious American, this would seem a logical assumption. The French, however, are not so obsessed with allergies, preferring to blame most physical troubles on the liver.[49]

The above technique has proven popular with teachers in culture workshops across the country. H. Ned Seelye, in his book on Teaching Culture, describes a variety of culture assimilators which are excellent for classroom use.

## Culture Capsule

The culture capsule has likewise been popular with many foreign language teachers. It has proven itself as a valuable tool in helping students to understand the cultures of other lands and peoples. A culture capsule is a short description of only one essential difference between an American and a foreign custom. Following the description

is a set of stimulating questions to be used for class discussions. In addition, the culture capsule is always accompanied by visuals which illustrate the cultural difference involved.

Like the culture assimilator, the culture capsule discusses only one cultural difference that might be misunderstood, but the technique is different. While the culture assimilator involves silent reading, the culture capsule, on the other hand, requires an oral presentation during which appropriate pictures, slides, or transparencies are shown. The following is an example of a French culture capsule, called "French Bread". The accompanying visuals for the capsule are pictures or slides of a French family at mealtime as well as charts showing the different shapes of French bread and their names:

> We speak of a thing being as good as gold, but the French people speak of a thing being as good as bread. The French love and value bread as an important element of life. They eat bread at every meal. It comes in various shapes and sizes.
>
> French bread is made without shortening or preservatives. Therefore, it dries quickly, and a fresh supply must be purchased for every meal. If bread is left over from the evening meal, it will not be wasted. It will be used in cooking or will be toasted for breakfast to be eaten with butter and jam. This is called "une tartine". Butter is not served with bread at any meal, except breakfast.
>
> At lunch and supper a freshly-cut loaf of bread is usually placed in the center of the

table. After taking a slice of bread, each person places it on the tablecloth above his fork. To eat it, he will break off a bite-sized piece and hold it in his left hand as he eats. He will use the piece as a "pusher" and will eat it when it is full of sauce or meat gravy. After that he will break off another bite-sized piece. He will use his bread as a pusher for sauces, salads, and between courses to "clear the plate".

Questions

1. How often do the French eat bread?
2. How do they indicate the importance of bread?
3. Why must the bread be purchased just before the meal?
4. What happens to any leftover bread?
5. What is a "tartine"?
6. Is butter always served with the bread?
7. How does each person eat his slice of bread?
8. Is it polite to use bread as a "pusher" in France? [50]

Culture capsules usually represent a very interesting and stimulating learning experience, mainly because of the accompanying visuals. Their usefulness is manifold: They review and intensify what a person already knows about his own culture; they offer the means for understanding the target culture; and they do so by creating a feeling of empathy for the target culture.

Many excellent culture capsules have recently been

developed to be used in connection with French, German, and Spanish language study. They are available from J. Dale Miller and Russell H. Bishop, Brigham Young University.

## Value Clarification

Value clarification is being used increasingly to improve understanding among different national groups. The advantage of this method is that it leads students to greater understanding not only of others, but also of themselves.

We have learned our values as a part of growing up in our particular culture. But the people of other cultures do not share our values and are therefore too quickly criticized as being wrong. Just as they offend us with their behavior, so do we offend them with ours, and neither is fully aware as to why this takes place.

The value clarification technique will thrust students into conscious thinking about conflicting behaviors occurring in other cultures, so that they may judge intelligently the "wrongs" of others. The technique makes use of value sheets which consist of three components: (1) the social context, usually a description of an incident from the target culture, (2) two decision sheets, one to be completed by each individual student, and the other to be

completed by small groups of five or six students, and (3) a set of questions, called discussion starters, designed for use by the teacher in guiding student reactions.

As in life the value clarification technique offers no final or completely "right" answers, rather it is intended to help students interpret conflicting values from other cultures in terms of the culture in which they are the accepted norm, whereby students will also be able to reach a clearer understanding of their own values. The following example of a value clarification unit is entitled "Got his Goat".

Social Context

Joe lives on a ranch in Texas where his father raises cattle, sheep, and a few goats. For his Four-H projects Joe has shown his prize steer as well as his pet goats. Each year the steer he shows at the state fair is sold for beef, but the goats are raised mainly for milk, and each one has a pet name.

Joe's father, a successful rancher is going to Mexico to advise several ranchers who want to learn more about U.S. cattle breeding techniques. Joe accompanies his father for the two-week stay and will live with a family on a Mexican hacienda.

When Joe arrives at his new home, the García family is very excited and pleased to have him visit. In honor of his arrival, the family is having a small fiesta that evening. The main dish, Joe is promised, is to be very special.

Some time later, Joe inquires as to why the family servants are at the back of the house digging a pit. Joe does not completely understand the señora's explanation in Spanish. That evening the servants remove a cabrito (roast baby goat) from the pit. Joe immediately thinks

of his own pet goats at home and a lump forms in his throat. The family looks expectantly for what they are sure will be a very pleased reaction. Joe knows he cannot eat the goat, but he also knows he cannot insult his host family who has prepared this feast just for him. Trying to do the least amount of harm, he arrives at a decision. He decides . . .

Individual Decision Sheet

Directions: Using the spaces provided, complete this decision sheet. Do this individually.

Actions Joe might decide to take in this situation are:_____

In my opinion Joe should_____

I believe this is best because_____

Group Decision Sheet

Directions: Working as a member of your group, complete this decision sheet without referring to the individual decision sheet.

Actions Joe might decide to take are_____

We believe the best choice is_____

We believe our choice is best because_____

Discussion Starters

1. Why did Joe's father go to Mexico?

2. What cultural differences did Joe encounter during his visit?

3. How might this culture shock have been avoided?

4. In what other areas do North Americans cooperate with Mexicans to achieve common goals?

5. What foods do we have in the United States that might be considered strange to someone from Mexico?

6. Which would be more important to you--sacrificing a personal belief or avoiding insulting someone from another culture?

7. If you were Señora García in this situation, how would you have felt?

8. What good consequences might be derived from this experience?[51]

Excellent value clarification units have been published by the Center for Latin American Studies under the title of Cross-Cultural Models of Teaching. Latin American Examples. They are quite suitable for the Spanish classroom. Also, Raymond L. Gordon's Living in Latin America. A Case Study in Cross-Cultural Communication, published by National Textbook Company, is an excellent tool in the hands of a teacher who is interested in designing his own value clarification units.

## Mini-Drama

An excellent method to teach cross-cultural understanding is the mini-drama. Here the students themselves must act out the cultural differences. A mini-drama usually consists of about three to five short scenes, each of which contains an example of an American misinterpreting what he sees or hears in the host country. Yet the real cause of the misunderstanding is not explained until the end of the last scene. A mini-drama may easily be assigned to a group of students a day or two before performing it in class.

The advantage of the mini-drama is that it confronts the student with a "real life" situation, and that it forces him to take sides: Experience has shown that he will generally identify with the American in the drama and thus will make the same incorrect assumptions. It is not until the end of the drama that he finally realizes his mistake. The drama then teaches him that different peoples have different ways of dealing with a given situation and that knowing the vocabulary is not enough to avoid misunderstanding. Communication involves more than just words. Here is an example of a German mini-drama, entitled "The Noon Meal".

Scene I - It is about 1:00 p.m. Frank and Betty Harrison, a middle-aged couple from Chicago, have come to Göttingen, Germany, to visit their son Jack who is spending the year studying chemistry in Göttingen on a Fulbright grant. They spot a restaurant, Zum Goldenen Adler, go in and wait to be seated.

Frank: I'm starved.

Betty: I wonder how long we'll have to wait to be seated. Do you see the hostess anywhere?

Frank: No, but there are a few empty tables. We shouldn't have to wait long. (Long pause)

Betty: (greatly irritated) Just look at that, will you? Those people are just going right past us and are sitting down.

Frank: Well, why don't we just do the same? There is a table for four. Let's grab it before someone else does.

Scene II - Frank and Betty are seated at the table when the waiter gives them two menus on his way to serve another table. The waiter returns.

Waiter: What would you like?
Betty: (pointing to the item Wienerschnitzel on the menu) I'd like that.
Frank: I'll have the Sauerbraten. We'll both have beer to drink.
The waiter leaves. In the meantime the restaurant has filled up, and two well-dressed German businessmen come to the table.
Businessmen: Is the place still free?
The Harrisons do not understand what was said, but they smile. The two businessmen sit down and continue their animated conversation.
Betty: (with a questioning look) Frank, do you know these people?
Frank: No, I've never laid eyes on them.
Betty: It's strange. I swear these are the same two men who were standing with us in line at the airport.
The waiter brings the meal and Betty and Frank eat in an uncomfortable silence.

Scene III - Later on that day the Harrisons discuss the incident with their son as they stroll through the park.
Betty: It's peculiar, Jack, but I think we are being followed. The same two men who were behind us at the customs sat down at our table in the restaurant.
Frank: The only thing they said to us was "Mahlzeit", and if I remember correctly the little high school German I had, I think it is a dirty word.
Jack: Oh, come on, both of you! This is ridiculous.
Betty: What do you mean ridiculous?
Jack: First of all, it was a coincidence that you ran into those two men again. Secondly, in Germany it is perfectly all right for any person to sit down at a table with unoccupied seats, even though there are other people already sitting at that table.[52]

A collection of cultural mini-dramas as well as culture capsules to be used in the French, German, and Spanish classroom has been published by the American Council on the

Teaching of Foreign Languages under the title of Teaching Culture. The publication represents the workshop proceedings of the 1972 ACTFL Conference held in Atlanta, Georgia. Another excellent companion, designed for the Spanish language course, is Barbara Snyder's Encuentros Culturales: Cross-Cultural Mini-Dramas, available from National Textbook Company. This remarkable collection of fifty-three mini-dramas concentrates on those life styles, values, attitudes, expectations, and beliefs of the Spanish-speaking world that tend to be different in the United States.

## Audio-Motor Unit

The audio-motor unit was originally developed to improve the skill in listening comprehension; but it has also been found to be a valuable technique for cross-cultural learning. The audio-motor unit is a mini-lesson, consisting of a series of oral commands. Its technique is as follows: To start with the teacher gives a series of oral commands and immediately acts them out making use of gesture, pantomime, and facial expression. The students listen to these commands and observe the actions of the teacher. Afterwards the teacher repeats the commands, and this time the students act them out.

The theory behind the audio-motor unit is, that learning will improve if more than one sense modality is used,

that is, when students hear, see, and act out what is to be learned. While designed to improve the listening skill primarily, the audio-motor unit has in many instances also been an effective tool for teaching cultural insights. Let us take as an example an audio-motor unit on "Eating in a Spanish Restaurant":

| | |
|---|---|
| Estás en un restaurante | You are in a restaurant |
| Coge la servilleta | Pick up your napkin |
| Desdóblala | Unfold it |
| Ponla sobre las piernas | Put it in your lap |
| Coge el tenedor con la mano izquierda | Pick up the fork with your left hand |
| Coge el cuchillo con la mano derecha | Pick up the knife with your right hand |
| Corta un trozo de carne | Cut a piece of meat |
| Ponlo en la boca | Put in in your mouth |
| Mastícalo | Chew it |
| Trágalo | Swallow it |
| Deja en el plato el tenedor y el cuchillo | Leave the fork and knife on the plate |
| Deja las manos en la mesa | Leave your hands on the table |
| Sírvete un vaso de vino | Pour yourself a glass of wine |
| Bebe un poco | Take a sip |
| Quieres pan. Parte un trozo | You want some bread. Break off a piece |
| Cómelo | Eat it |
| Coge la cuenta | Pick up the bill |
| Mírala | Look at it |
| Saca tu billetera | Take out your wallet |
| Paga la cuenta | Pay the bill |
| Deja una propina | Leave a tip |
| Sal del restaurante | Leave the restaurant[53] |

From the above audio-motor unit several examples of cultural learning can be drawn. They are as follows:

1. Meat is eaten by lifting it to the mouth with the fork in the left hand while the knife stays in the right hand.

2. Bread is eaten by tearing off small pieces from the individual slice, instead of biting them off.

3. Wine is served as the common beverage at mealtime.

4. Both hands are put on the edge of the table when not in use.

Since the audio-motor unit, as its name implies, is a method of action teaching, the cultural learning here likewise takes place by action, that is through the physical involvement of the students.

The sample unit on "Eating in a Spanish Restaurant" is but one of many lessons which can be used in the format of an audio-motor unit. Differences found in going to the theater, going shopping, making a phone call, visiting a friend, and other such routines provide excellent material for constructing audio-motor units which are culturally vivid and thus would serve to strengthen cross-cultural understanding.

The principle underlying the audio-motor unit is not new, though it is generally known by other names. It was first discovered and described by François Guin in his work, L'art d'enseigner et d'etudier des langues (Paris, 1880), and is nowadays referred to as the Guin Method, or "dramatic method".

## Role Playing

Role playing is another excellent means of teaching cultural insights. Putting the student in the shoes of a foreign person can be a valuable learning experience for him, besides being a great deal of fun. Let us take the dating customs in Spanish speaking countries as an example. To begin with the teacher might explain that schools are not coeducational, therefore, one of the best ways to get acquainted, is the Sunday afternoon "paseo" around the central town square. It is customary for the girls to walk in one direction around the town square, and the boys in the opposite. As their eyes meet, they often begin to flirt with one another. Walking is popular in Spanish speaking countries. People of all ages enjoy the Sunday afternoon stroll at the "plaza mayor", and, of course, one will always find the inevitable spectator there sitting on sidewalk benches or in nearby outdoor cafes.[54]

To perform the paseo, the teacher should first try to create the illusion of a plaza mayor. Appropriate posters or pictures of a plaza along with several sidewalk cafes, a pretty water fountain, and perhaps a boy selling balloons should decorate the classroom walls. Also Spanish or Latin American music should be played.

Some students should be seated along the walls to serve as the spectators. Then the teacher should tell the boys to walk in groups of two or three in one direction, and the girls in the other. As they meet, they should make comments in Spanish about each other, such as ¡Hola, guapa! ¡Qué mona eres! ¡Qué vestido tan lindo!

Another example of role playing for the purpose of teaching cultural insights is the following unit on foreign table manners. To perform it, the teacher brings out paper plates, silverware, and slices of cake. He pretends that the slices of cake are pieces of meat and then shows the class how Europeans and Latin Americans would eat it: He cuts the meat with the knife in his right hand and then lifts it to his mouth with the fork in his LEFT hand. After a couple of performances, he should encourage his students to do the same.[55]

As a follow-up activity the teacher might suggest to his students to observe table manners in foreign movies and report their impressions to the class.

The German classroom would benefit from acting out the custom of daily greeting and leave-taking which is accompanied by a handshake. To perform this custom, students should pair off and practice the handshake until it is brief and firm, while saying to each other "Guten Tag"

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and "Auf Wiedersehen". Handshakes are expected in Germany if one does not want to be considered ill-mannered.

Activities that lend themselves to role playing are manifold. Here are a few additional suggestions for a try-out in the classroom: A conversation in Spain carried on with the speakers standing considerably closer to each other than do Americans; dating in Germany and the custom of going "Dutch"; a visit of friends in France and the customary bouquet of flowers; a shopping trip in Europe and the use of the metric system.

## Folklore and Folktale

Folklore and folktale have always been an important part of a people's total culture. They reflect the customs and beliefs that have for many centuries guided the course of a people's culture. In their simple style and short form, folklore and folktale provide easy reading material for the younger foreign language student, while at the same time they shed a great deal of light on many aspects of life.

A story from Grimm's Kinder und Hausmärchen, entitled "Rotkäppchen" (Little Red Riding Hood), may serve as an example here. Both the German original and the American version sold at local bookstores should be studied and compared in class. The ensuing discussion should focus

on the similarities and differences in the two versions. If differences are observed, do they reflect particular attitudes of the two cultures? In most cases they do. For example, in the German original the grandmother receives cake and wine as a gift, while in the American version the wine has been replaced by either milk or grape juice. This difference then teaches us that the American concept of alcohol as sin is not reflected in German culture, on the contrary, wine may be taken to improve an older person's health.[56]

Some scholars have attempted to classify folktales for comparative purposes. An excellent series of studies is entitled Märchen aus deutschen Landschaften. It is published by the Gesellschaft zur Pflege der Märchenforschung in Münster, Germany.

The Spanish-speaking world enjoys an especially rich and varied heritage of folklore and folktale. In fact, one of the basic characteristics of Spanish culture itself is its folkishness, a trait that is common to a people with a strong attachment to its native region, or "patria chica". This folkishness, often referred to as "lo popular", has been described in numerous publications both here and abroad. For the teacher who is interested, Sal y Pimienta by Manuel Salas is an excellent source of folklore material

which lends itself to classroom use. The book contains folktales, folksongs, and proverbs that portray many characteristic features of the "Spanish way of life".

## Folksong and Folkdance

"Folksongs and folkdances capture the spirit of a people. As the students learn the traditional lyrics and tunes, as they dance the traditional steps, they are participating in the cultural heritage of the people they are studying."[57]

Many folksongs grew out of the experiences of everyday life. Thus the Burgundian folksong "Planton la Vigne" illustrates the importance of wine in French life, while the German folksong "Das Wandern ist des Müllers Lust" praises the Germans' love for hiking.

Folksongs can provide us with a great deal of cultural insight because they are so varied: They may be anecdotical, historical, narrative, lyrical, or humorous. Many of them are also joined with folkdances. The teacher who is gifted in music and dancing would want to teach some folkdances in class.

Spanish folk music is among the richest in the world. This is so, partly because many cultures have mingled in the Iberian Peninsula, each contributing its share to the development of the popular "melos", and partly because

the Spaniards are so strongly attached to their native traditions. In Spanish dancing we see the same fusion of diverse cultures that may be observed in Spanish folk music. Certain it is that the Spaniards are a dancing people and have been famed as such from the earliest times to the present. Cervantes once wrote that in Spain the newborn babe comes dancing forth from its mother's womb.

The lyrical expression which is most danceable and outstanding of Spanish folksongs is the "fandango". The fandango is a fast dance performed by a couple to the music of guitars and castanets which alternate with a singer. The song that accompanies this dance is always captivating because of the highly emotional content of its lyrics. Here is a typical example of a fandango:

> A pearl fell into a lily
> A ray of light bathed it
> An angel descended and gave it a kiss
> And then you were born,
> So that I would be tormented.[58]

That the fandango is more often danced in Andalusia than elsewhere in Spain, tells us a good deal about the people of this region who are known for their intense feelings and highly emotional reactions.

In more advanced classes the tapes and records of folksongs might be studied for transcription. A project of this nature is best accomplished in groups of three or

four students. The transcribed folksongs should later be discussed with the class as a whole and examined for their cultural content.

## Festivals

Celebrating foreign festivals, such as Fasching, Mardi Gras, and Carnaval, in the classroom gives students an opportunity to experience the foreign culture at one of its happiest times. It is an activity that young students look forward to. Many of them are quite excited about making their own costumes and masks. Others like to contribute by preparing some authentic snacks and refreshments from the country whose festival is being celebrated. The young artists in the class may be asked to draw some of the festival scenes on large posters with which to decorate the classroom walls. As students celebrate the occasion, appropriate music from the target culture should also be played.

An activity for the German class, such as looking at pictures of parades and beer wagons, drawn by gaily decorated horses, would convey the festive spirit of the famous Oktoberfest (October festival), celebrated in Munich. According to custom, the festival lasts for sixteen days, ending on the first Sunday in October. Many visitors from all over the world attend it, consuming, along with the

natives, huge amounts of beer and Weißwurst (white sausage), a local specialty. The historic reason for its creation was a wedding in the Bavarian ruling house in honor of which a public festival was held.

Breaking a Mexican piñata is a welcome activity for the Spanish class around Christmas time. It also provides an excellent opportunity for the teacher to explain how Christmas is celebrated differently in Mexico and other Spanish speaking countries. Numerous slides and filmstrips are available on the subject, and now would be a good time to show a few of them. And, of course, singing some of the foreign Christmas songs with the class is a delightful activity which students of all ages enjoy very much.

## Newspapers and Magazines

"Although in many parts of the world newspapers and magazines have been elements of everyday culture for hundreds of years, it is only recently that they have been considered as useful tools for foreign language learning."[59] Newspapers and magazines play an important role in the daily life of most cultures. Besides being an up-to-date source of information, they convey many aspects of culture which normally do not appear in a textbook. Cultural material may be drawn from almost any item of a newspaper or magazine, such as headlines, editorials, articles, sports

pages, weather reports, advertisements, comics, including pictures.

Let us look at the sports page of a Spanish newspaper. Here we find a description of an exciting football game. Is it the same game as our American football? What are the differences? What vocabulary items related to football may we learn from the article?

A simple weather report conveys cultural information: Is the uninformed student inclined to believe that unusually hot weather is predicted when the temperature listed is "only" forty degrees?

Advertisements furnish a variety of topics for discussion. Let us look at an advertisement on perfume in both an American and a foreign magazine. How do the two ads compare as to techniques used to sell the product? How does the language differ? Is the visual arrangement appealing? As a follow-up activity here, students might be asked to write their own ads.

The foregoing items have been chosen to show that newspapers and magazines offer a wealth of information from which many cultural insights may be gained. They should definitely be included in the cultural program.

Mini-culture units, entitled The Newspaper, are now available for the French, German, and Spanish classroom.

The units consist of authentic newspaper clippings and photographs, as well as a set of exercises in order to determine the student's comprehension and interpretation of the reading material. They are published by National Textbook Company in the form of preprinted spirit duplicating masters and include a teacher's guide.

## Humor

A great deal about the national character of a people may be learned through humor. Humor very often tells us more about the different customs of the target culture than a long descriptive essay.

German culture, being composed of many subcultures, is especially rich in regional humor: Regional jokes and anecdotes not only describe behavioral patterns of local communities, but also concentrate on culture conflicts between regions. Thus the contrast between the efficient, energetic North German and the easygoing South German is well demonstrated in the many humorous anecdotes of Berliners in Munich and Bavarians in Berlin. One of the more popular tales on the subject is that of the Bavarian forest workers who spend all morning trying to remove a fallen tree from the roadway. A Berliner who has watched them work, finally loses patience, lifts the tree and shoves it aside, whereupon the Bavarians comment, with a

shrug of their shoulders: "Tjö, mit Gewalt!" (Well, if you use force!)[60]

The short regional jokes of Germany often continue the tradition of the medieval rogues of the "Schwank" literature, such as "Till Eulenspiegel" and others. Some of the best known figures today are "Tünnes and Schäl" from Cologne, "Klein Erna" from Hamburg, and "Baron Poldi" from Vienna. The following "Tünnes and Schäl" joke is representative of the relaxed way of life in Cologne and the Rhineland region:

> Tünnes appears with a ladies' bike.
> "Where did you get it?"
> "From my girl."
> "How?"
> "We were biking together in the forest, and when we stopped for coffee, she put her arms around me and said: 'You can have anything from me you want'--so I took her bike."[61]

As a parallel development Spanish humor often continues the tradition of the "pícaro". It depicts the picaresqueness of the Spaniard, his strong individualism, or his trust in his personal luck, as is evidenced by the following four-line "copla".

> Me quisiste, me olvidaste
> Me volviste a querer;
> Zapato que yo desecho
> No me lo vuelvo a poner.
>
> You loved me, you forgot me
> You loved me again;
> A shoe which I throw out
> I shall not put on again.

It has been said that in every Spaniard lives a bit of a rogue. This trait was first attested to in the famous "Lazarillo de Tormes", precursor of scores of other rogues who have appeared in Spanish anecdotes right up to modern times. In fact, "The rogue or pícaro is so deeply ingrained in Hispanic culture that a man can be a caballero and not pay his debts."[62]

## Proverbs

Proverbs have a very ancient tradition having been accumulated in the memory of many successive generations. They represent popular guidelines for moral behavior, as is so well attested to by the following Spanish "refrán":

> En tus apuros y tus afanes
> Pide consejo a los refranes.[63]
>
> In your troubles and anxieties
> Ask the proverbs for advice.

Proverbs embody the down-to-earth wisdom of a people as it has reached us through centuries of experience and observations. They portray many facets of a people's thoughts and behavior, and they teach us a good deal about life itself. The following examples of proverbs are representative of the Frenchman's individualism, the German's sense of justice, and the Spaniard's judgment of human relations:

French

Chacun pour soi, Dieu pour tous.
Each for himself, God for all.

Chacun à son goût.
Everyone to his own taste.

Chacun prêche pour son saint.
Everyone preaches according to his own saint.

Charité bien ordonnée commence par soi-meme.
Charity well ordered begins with self.

German

Ruhe ist die erste Bürgerpflicht.
Peace and quiet is the first duty of the citizen.

Wie Du mir, so ich Dir.
As you treat me, so I treat you.

Was ich nicht weiß, macht mich nicht heiß.
What I do not know about, does not excite me.

Lieber ein Ende mit Schrecken, als ein Schrecken ohne Ende.
Better an end with horror, than a horror without end.

Der Mohr hat seine Schuldigkeit getan, der Mohr kann gehen.
The Moor has done his duty, the Moor may leave.

Spanish

Dime con quién andas, y te diré quién eres.
Tell me with whom you go, and I shall tell you, who you are.

Amor que mucho jura, poco dura.
Love that swears a lot, does not last long.

El que da y quita, con el Diablo se desquita.
He who gives and takes away, takes revenge like the Devil.

El que con lobos anda, a aullar se enseña.
He who walks with the wolves, teaches himself to howl.

En boca cerrada, no entran moscas.
Flies do not enter a mouth that is closed.

Proverbs should be introduced with posters which illustrate the moral point involved. The artists in the class should also letter them. Later on these posters could be used to decorate the classroom walls.

When discussing foreign proverbs in class, the teacher might also ask his students if they know of any in their own tongue which convey the same moral point. In so doing, students will be made aware of many similarities that exist between various cultures. Is the foreign culture really that foreign? Here are a few examples of proverbs that express similarity of thought. They are taken from the Spanish language:

Más vale pájaro en la mano que cien volando.
A bird in the hand is worth more than a hundred flying about.
English Equivalent:
A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.

Ojos que no ven, corazón que no siente.
Eyes that do not see, a heart that does not feel.
English Equivalent:
Out of sight, out of mind.

Mal de muchos, consuelo de tontos.
The evil of many, the consolation of fools.
English Equivalent:
Misery loves company.

Many scholars abroad and in the United States have dedicated their efforts to the study and interpretation of proverbs. Their work has, without doubt, added a new dimension to the teaching of culture. Archer Taylor's

comparative study of world proverbs, entitled The Proverb, published by the Harvard University Press, is a valuable source of material for the foreign language teacher.

## Student Projects

Students should be encouraged to deepen their knowledge about the foreign culture by preparing independent projects. Even a beginning student can collect pictures, make a scrapbook, or give an oral report to the class on a famous event or person which links the United States to the target country.

Students may also be asked to visit local department stores and prepare a list of items that were imported from the target culture, such as Hummel figurines or Steif toys from Germany; perfume and Limoges China from France; Maja soap, Mallorca pearls, and Toledo cutlery from Spain.[64]

Another interesting project would be to cut out advertisements from magazines and journals of those foreign products which are sold in the United States and then prepare a bulletin board display for the class.

Students with a special talent in cooking might enjoy preparing foreign foods and refreshments to be shared with the class on a special occasion. The artists in the class probably would like to design colorful travel posters which relate some of the experiences a tourist is likely to have

in a foreign country.

More advanced students might be interested in pen pals or tape pals with whom they could exchange cultural information. The contents of the letters and tapes received from abroad should definitely be shared and discussed with the entire class. Experience has shown that such discussions increase the interest in foreign language study.

## Foreign Visitors

Native speakers are often delighted to visit foreign language students and to be able to speak to them. Inviting a native speaker to the foreign language class can be one of the most rewarding experiences for both students and visitor, and it is one of the best ways to make the foreign culture become alive.

Before inviting a foreign visitor to the class, the teacher should ask him what topic he would like to present. Then he should prepare his students for the upcoming visit by teaching them the vocabulary that would most likely be used in discussing the topic. He should also ask his students to prepare some questions in the foreign language that they would like to ask the foreign visitor. These advance preparations will add much to the success of the visit.

## Film, Filmstrip, and Slide Show

To bring variety into the classroom, and if time permits, a film now and then should by all means be included in the cultural program. Films are always welcomed by the student, and they are extremely useful in furthering his interest in foreign places and people.

Recently sound filmstrips on every-day life in foreign countries have become available for purchase. A sound filmstrip is usually accompanied by a tape on which a native speaker explains the contents of the various photographs. Often the explanations are conducted in dialogue form, and several speakers can be heard on tape. From time to time their comments are interrupted with some authentic music from the foreign country. Many of these filmstrips are an excellent means for conveying cross-cultural understanding, for they present behaviors, beliefs, and values from the target culture which are different from ours. Therefore, after viewing the filmstrip, students should be encouraged to talk about its contents as well as the culture points made. With more advanced students some of the discussion should be tried in the foreign language.

An excellent cultural companion to any foreign language class, regardless of level of instruction, is the

recently published Passport program which includes filmstrips, tapes in the target language as well as English, and a teacher's guide with duplicating masters for student activities. The objectives of the program are to expose the student to the most common situations he might encounter in a foreign culture and to involve him actively in the study of the foreign culture by means of a variety of activities provided on the duplicating masters. The program also includes an extremely useful lesson on how to overcome the measurement barrier which describes the difference between our present measuring system versus the more practical metric system. The Passport programs are available for the French, German, and Spanish classroom from EMC Corporation in St. Paul, Minnesota.

If the teacher has traveled abroad, he has probably brought back with him many interesting slides. Others are available commercially. These slides could easily be combined into a small slide show. Not more than twenty-five slides should be shown at any one time in order to keep student interest at optimum level. A good way to give such a slide show in the classroom, is to accompany it with appropriate music from the target country. The teacher could easily make his own tape by copying the music he wants from records or tapes. Many public and

university libraries have excellent holdings of foreign music available to the teacher.

## Cultural Island

"At the door of the foreign language classroom the student should abandon the mentality of his own culture and assume that of the culture he is studying."[65] The foreign language classroom he enters should be a "cultural island", alive with colorful posters and pictures. Besides being interesting to look at, pictures can tell us a great deal about the country whose language is being studied. And students will notice them while sitting in class.

Posters may be obtained from travel bureaus and airline offices; and for pictures, the teacher may wish to search such magazines as National Geographic, Echo de la Mode, Der Spiegel, El Mundo Español, and others.

A bulletin board is useful for posting current events, advertisements, comic strips, cartoons, and other items of interest from the target culture. A map of the foreign country and a wall calendar on which students could mark the foreign holidays also belong in every foreign language classroom.

The artists in the class might try their talents in converting the classroom clock into a special twenty-four-hour clock by adding the numbers 13 to 24 to its outside

margin. The twenty-four-hour clock is an excellent teaching device for explaining the official time, as it is used on the European continent and known here as the army time. "Even the clockwatchers in the class will be learning something about the twenty-four-hour clock as they wonder when the period will end."[66]

Students in the foreign language class should also have a chance to select foreign names for themselves. The frequent use of these names when calling on students will add an important touch of reality to the "cultural island" in the classroom.

## CHAPTER VI

## CLOSING NOTE

We have established then that language cannot be separated from the cultural framework in which and through which it exists. No matter what force impels our study, whether we seek culture for understanding the ways of the people, or simply the language for the purpose of communication, we cannot properly comprehend one without the other. Therefore, culture must be an integral part of our foreign language study if we are to communicate to the fullest extent.

Every culture is unique and must be understood on its own terms. Or, as Edward Sapir explained it:

> The worlds in which different societies live are distinct worlds, not merely the same worlds with different labels attached.[67]

When we think how easy it is to be misunderstood even in our own culture using the same language, the problem of communicating from one world to another, one cultural world to another, is seen in its true proportion. Therefore, it is important that we remember that a different language implies a different culture, and that other peoples actually see things differently.

Under the concept of modern humanism, we concern ourselves with our ability to accept the diversity of other cultures. For the foreign language teacher this implies that he should have acquired a minimum background in cultural anthropology and sociology in order to gain an insight into man's behavior. He should also have studied the history of the people and the geography and economics of the country whose language he is teaching. The acquisition of this knowledge is as deserving of his time as the foreign language courses themselves required for his specialty.

In addition, the foreign language teacher must keep abreast of current developments in the target country. This may be done by subscribing to some of the foreign newspapers and periodicals and by listening to foreign radio broadcasts.

One of the best ways of keeping in touch, however, is to travel abroad. Nothing compares with the first-hand experiences of living among the people and being able to speak with them. The United States Government recognizes the necessity of these journeys abroad, as is shown by the fact that a federal statute allows generous deductions on a teacher's tax returns for travel expenses to countries whose language and culture he teaches. The

statute reflects the current impact of modern humanism.

Among the many voices who have cited the modern humanistic value of foreign language study is William Riley Parker. In his book, The National Interest and Foreign Languages, one may read as follows:

> Learning a foreign language is an educational experience. By acquiring even a limited skill, which may or may not be retained, the individual finds himself personally breaking the barriers of a single SPEECH and a single CULTURE, experiencing another culture at first-hand in the symbols through which it expresses its realities.[68]

The story of language is the story of culture, for language is something to which all human beings contribute by the mere fact that they speak it. As Nelson Brooks had explained:

LANGUAGE AND CULTURE ARE NOT SEPARABLE

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